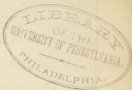


52 10th & 8th Market Ch

No.
4

An account
of an
Epidemic Fever,



as it appeared in Adams County in 1823,
being an

Inaugural Dissertation
for the

Degree of Doctor of Medicine.
by

Passed March 24
1824

Alexander Speer
of
Pennsylvania

W. L. H.
Dean.

Introduction

The general importance attached to every epidemic, the extensive ravages committed by the one which has so recently pervaded our country and particularly the universal dominion it attained and exerted over Gettysburg and its vicinity, during the last three years whilst I was a student of medicine, claims a right to my inaugural essay. I pretend not to enlarge the bounds of medical science or shed new light on the paths of philosophical inquiry, by developing its causes, displaying any new laws or proclaiming any specific method of treatment, nor shall I even attempt the more humble task of recording its history from its inception as a simple intermittent in 1821, nor trace its varying form through continued, remittent and dysenteric in 1822, but be confined to the observations I was enabled to make during the last year. I will however premise, that its localities were the same in each year, that is,

the particular districts of country in which it
appeared the first year were its theatre in all,
and those situations which were exempt the
first season, were equally fortunate in the suc-
ceeding ones with the exception of one, which,
although severely suffering during the winter,
was wholly exempt during the warmer months.

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An account &c.

The weather during the months of April and May was very cool with the exception of a few warm days. A great quantity of rain fell out during these months, owing to which, and to the coldness of the weather the farmers were unusually late in putting in their spring crops. Thrushes were also very common, inasmuch that fruit of almost every description failed. In June and July the weather became more moderate and pleasant. There were also considerable quantities of rain during these months, frequent showers alternated by warm sunshine. This was what is popularly termed very "seasonable" weather, promising to agriculturists the most abundant crops. No wind they disappointed in their expectations; vegetation of every kind flourished most luxuriantly. During this time we had some thunderstorms in which the lightning was remarkably vivid, followed in quick succession by most tremendous peals of thunder. About the

The account of

the first voyage of Christopher Columbus to the Indies, as related by himself in his own words, translated from the original Spanish into English, by Thomas Hakluyt, Esq. of the Middle Temple, London, Printed by W. Stansfeld, 1743.

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3. The third voyage of Christopher Columbus to the Indies, as related by himself in his own words, translated from the original Spanish into English, by Thomas Hakluyt, Esq. of the Middle Temple, London, Printed by W. Stansfeld, 1743.

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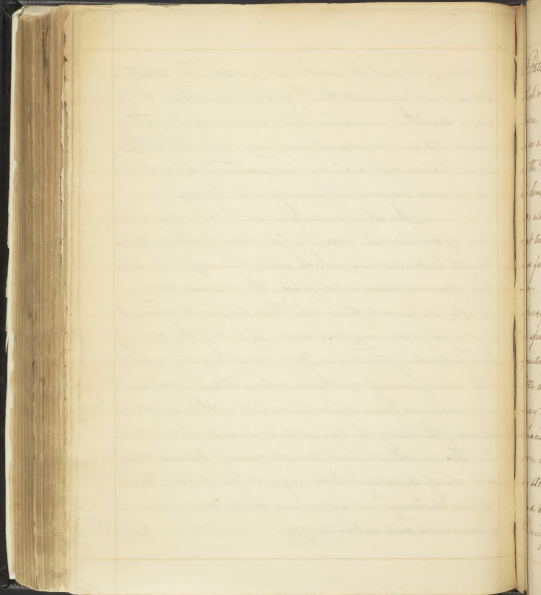
8. The eighth voyage of Christopher Columbus to the Indies, as related by himself in his own words, translated from the original Spanish into English, by Thomas Hakluyt, Esq. of the Middle Temple, London, Printed by W. Stansfeld, 1743.

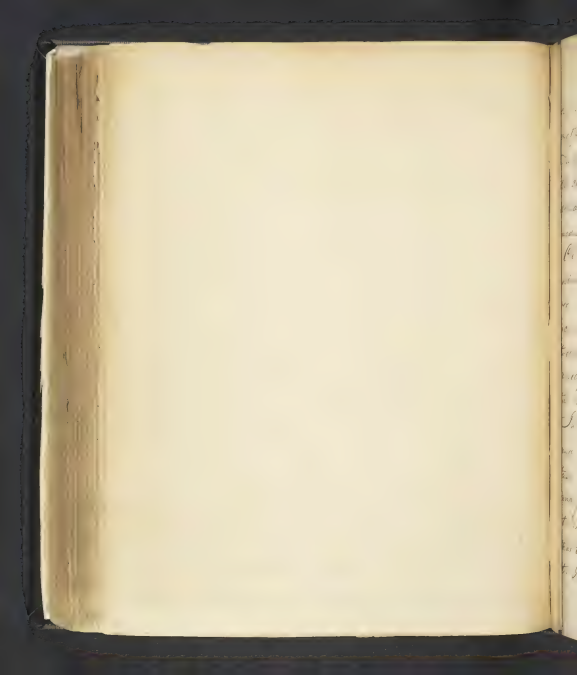
9. The ninth voyage of Christopher Columbus to the Indies, as related by himself in his own words, translated from the original Spanish into English, by Thomas Hakluyt, Esq. of the Middle Temple, London, Printed by W. Stansfeld, 1743.

10. The tenth voyage of Christopher Columbus to the Indies, as related by himself in his own words, translated from the original Spanish into English, by Thomas Hakluyt, Esq. of the Middle Temple, London, Printed by W. Stansfeld, 1743.

middle of August the weather set in warm, and continued warm and dry until the 8th of September when the rainy weather commenced. It continued cloudy and rained less or more almost every day until the 20th when it cleared up cool and was succeeded by cool mornings and evenings with sharp white frosts.

In May and June our country was almost free of any disease except a few cases of intermittent, (mostly milder tertians) which were then supposed either to be sporadic cases or relapses; the disease being chiefly confined to those who had laboured under it during the preceding autumn. In July the cases of intermittent of the tertian form became more numerous and many cases of quotidian intermittent, remittent and continued fever appeared without in their symptoms bearing the use of the lancet to a considerable extent. In this month we had several cases of bilious colic, and one of dysentery which required for its cure, two copious bleedings, an antimonial emetic and a number of mercurial and saline purges.



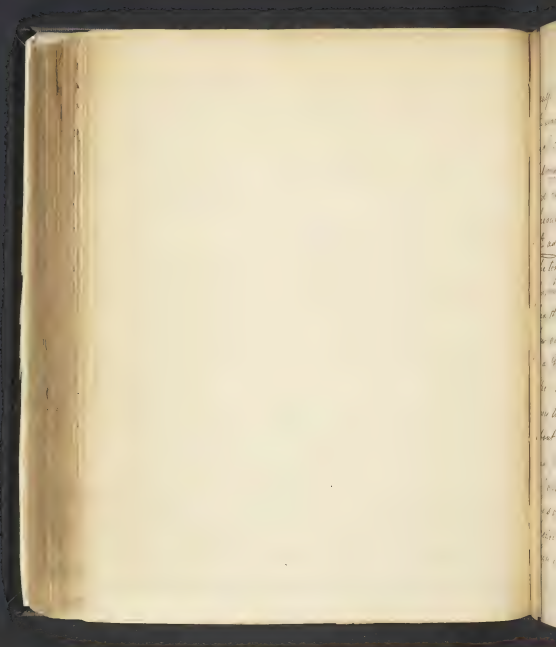


the following are the symptoms of the
disease.

In a few days the patient is affected with
the common cold. The nose is inflamed and
the patient is unable to breathe through the
nostrils. The patient is often coughing and
sneezing and the eyes are inflamed.

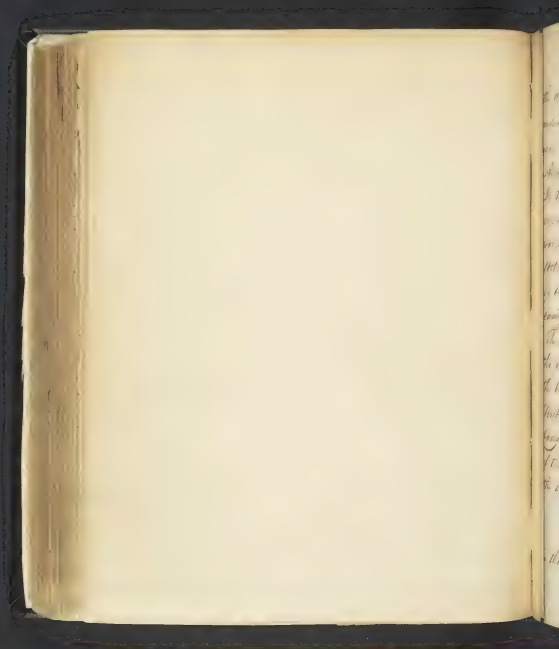
Children are frequently affected with this
disease and it is often fatal. The disease is
often accompanied with inflammation of the
lungs. Some children die within a few days of
the onset of the disease, and many others
die after a few days of age. The disease is
often fatal, especially in children, and it is
often fatal in adults.

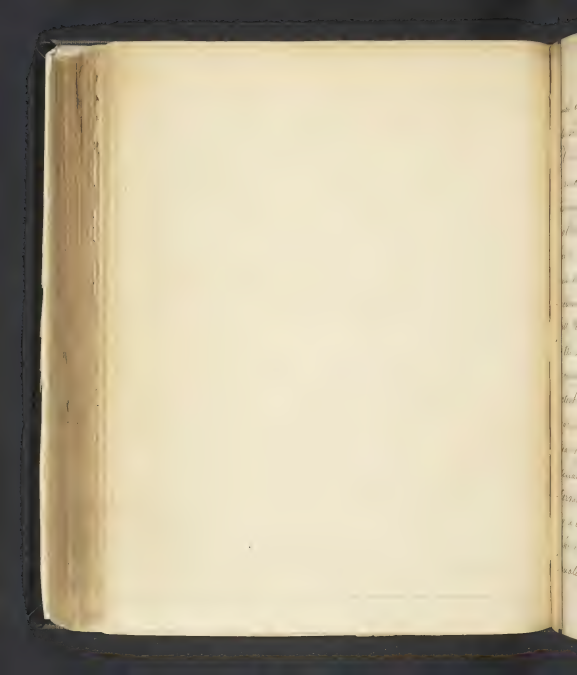
In the exanthematic patient, the patient is
affected with the common cold, and the
patient is unable to breathe through the
nostrils. The patient is often coughing and
sneezing and the eyes are inflamed. Some
patients die within a few days of the onset
of the disease, and many others die after
a few days of age. The disease is often
fatal, especially in children, and it is often
fatal in adults.



scalp. The face was very red, and the eyes
threw a suffused glow, and the tongue
was very moist, and the
blowing action. The face was flushed and the eyes
red; and sometimes from the commencement, but
frequently from the chest on, and the
the advent of the tongue was large and red
The tongue in some cases was thick, covered with a white
film, but generally with a red, and again it
had the appearance of being that it was not white. In a
few cases the tongue was clear and of a bright red color
and had a granulated, shagreened appearance.

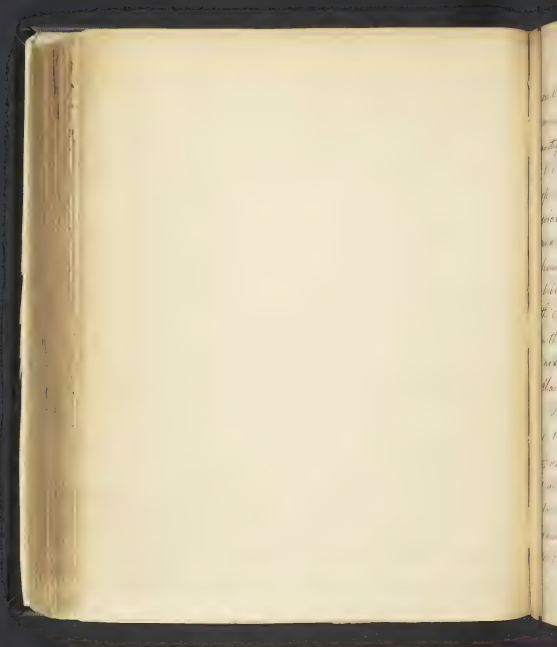
The respiration was hurried and labored, with in many
cases, the sensation of a great weight on the chest
about the precordia. The skin was dry, and warm,
and frequently tinged with bile, especially about the throat
or lower part of the face. In some cases the yellow
color of the skin continued from the face down to the lower
limbs, and even to the feet. The urine was sparingly excreted and
was colored. The bowels were generally bound, but





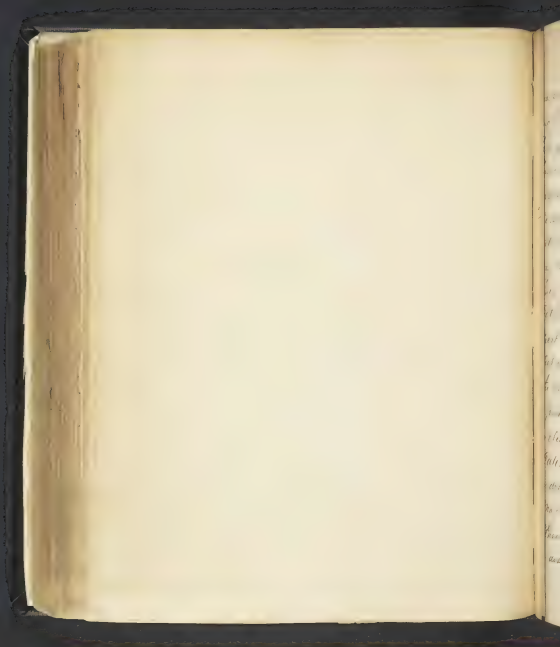
much altered precepts. One I am told, is, from a
ghost was not intended, among the rest.

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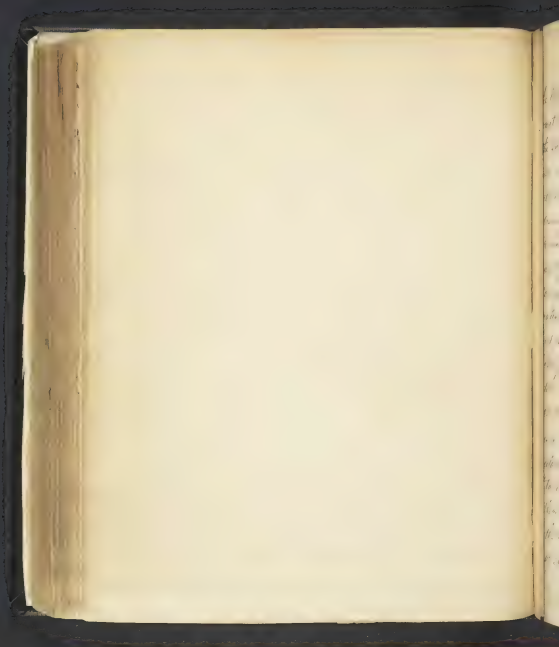


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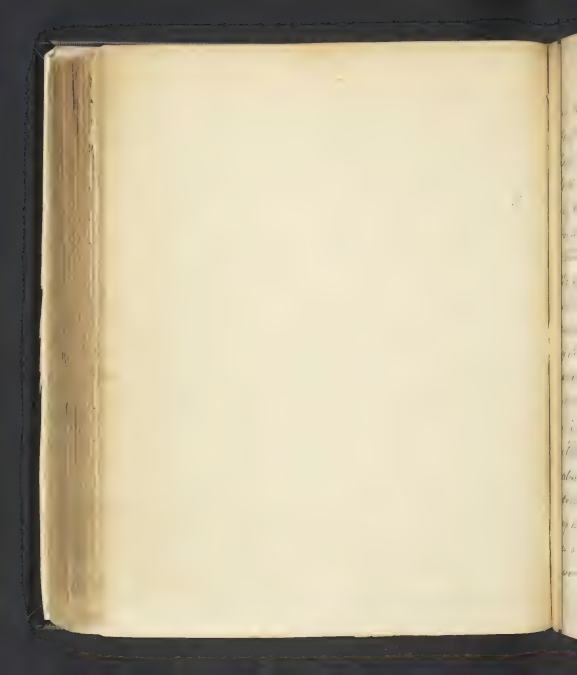
But in the short time given me, I have
in two years, written and sent out to the
public, a volume that none of its contemporaries could
have improved on, and which I feel proud to
say, has been the means of the publication of
the "Liberator" in this country, and the
first of our periodicals in the United States.



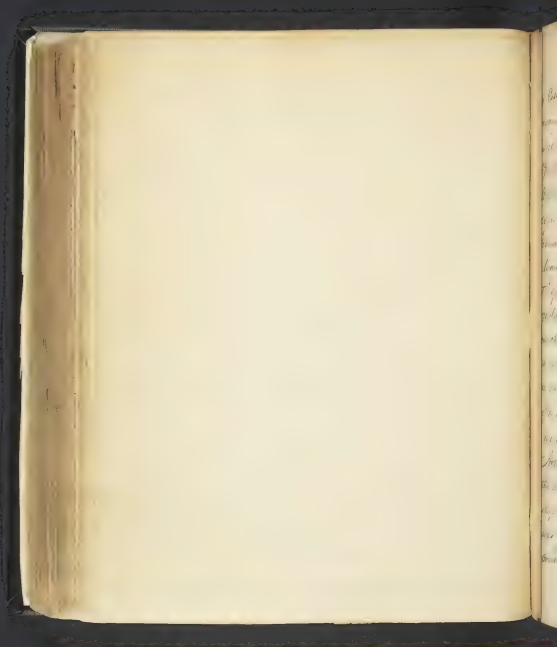
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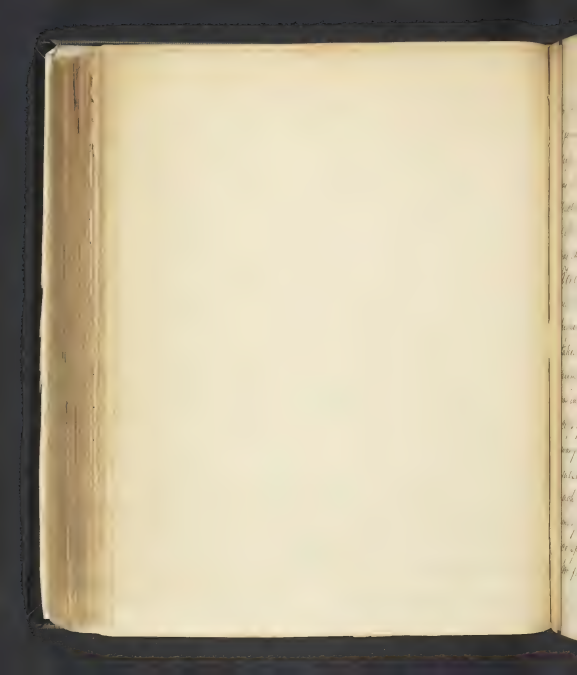


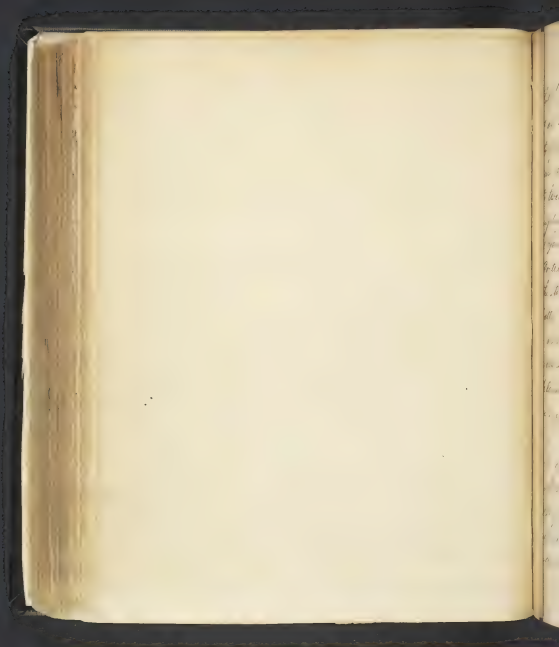
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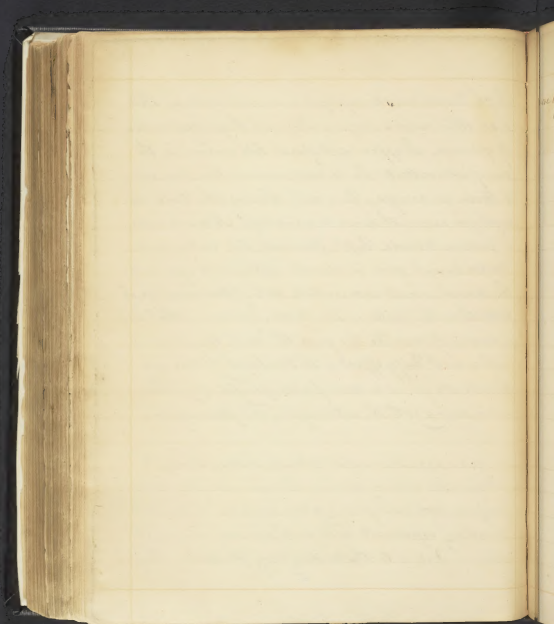






Sulph. Quinina was also employed in a number of cases. This of all other remedies was prescribed with the greatest certainty of success. It appeared to operate like a charm in the case of intermittents. In no case was more than from six to twelve grs necessary for a cure. Various other tonics were employed and with decided advantage. A combination of Gentian, Columbo, Sulph. Rheiubarb, Sal Tartar and Cortex Aurant. given in decoction appeared to agree with the stomach in weak and irritable states of that organ much better than the barks. Dr. Miller informs me that in a number of cases he has given the Carb. Magnesia with a most happy effect in the treatment of this complaint. He gave it in doses of a tea spoonful every hour or two, during both the intermission and paroxysm.

To guard against a relapse, it was necessary strictly to attend to the ordinary means recommended for that purpose, such as enjoining a due regulation of diet and avoiding exposure to cold and moisture and night-air. Yet notwithstanding every precaution they



were by no means uncommon.

